

ALTA

BY

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_____David Dzubay, Director of Thesis

Alta
for orchestra (2012)

Tonia Ko

Alta conveys a sense of height, with an aftertaste of vertigo. I experienced this sensation while sitting on an old military bunker at the end of a hike on the east coast of O'ahu, Hawai'i. To see the entire side of an island fan out far beneath me was truly a memorable experience, even for one who grew up amidst Hawai'i's natural splendor. I was also drawn to the texture on the surface of the ocean, which, while seemingly smooth at first glance, is full of delicate wrinkles which roll on infinitely.

The piece introduces, in ascending order, several aspects of an island cliffside: "where rocks meet sea-edge," "ocean skin" wrinkles, the falling "cliffsides," "whipping breezes," and a final, single gust of wind. The unpitched percussion instruments featured at the opening give way to a single pitch in the low strings. This pitch gradually fans outwards to produce more complex harmonic combinations. In fact, the harmonies in the piece repeatedly move towards tone clusters, which represent tension caused by a fear of heights. This tension is only released at the very end of the piece, when the same group of percussion instruments coincide with a "sigh" of air sounds from the brass section.

To take the metaphor of height somewhat literally, the overall shape of the work is organized by alternating ascents and descents. The first two ascending sections do so gradually, both leading to climaxes which start at the highest notes of the orchestra and quickly cascade downward through the entire ensemble. However, the last ascent is simply a melody which emerges from the aftermath of the largest "cascade." Over the span of a few bars, this melody is passed between different instrumental families until it reaches several mediative peals, which immediately stills the musical atmosphere. The ensuing coda reflects on previous events. But rather than gestures which move fluidly through vertical space, the layers of music which make up the coda are stratified-- locked within their respective levels of height.

Total Duration: about 7 minutes


Instrumentation:

2 flutes (2nd doubling piccolo)
2 oboes
2 clarinets in B \flat
2 bassoons

2 horns in F
2 trumpets in C
2 trombones
1 tuba

timpani

Initial tuning:

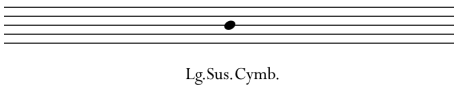


percussion (3 players)
1: small triangle, small suspended cymbal, wind gong, vibraphone

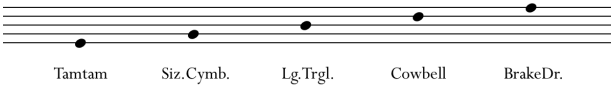
unpitched percussion chart



2: large suspended cymbal, crotales (sounding 15va higher), chimes, tom-toms (4)



3: brake drum, cowbell, sizzle cymbal, large triangle, tam-tam, temple blocks (5), marimba



harp
celesta (sounding 8va higher)

violin I
violin II
viola
violoncello
contrabass

Performance Notes:

- accidentals last until the end of the measure
- natural string harmonics are notated with fingered pitch and string number
- diamond-shaped noteheads for winds indicate breathing through the instrument
 - brass players should breathe into mouthpiece flipped backwards;
 - players should expel all air over indicated duration

Alta

♩=56 *Where rocks meet sea-edge*

7

This page of the musical score is for a symphony orchestra, featuring a variety of instruments and detailed performance instructions. The score is written in 3/4 time and includes a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

Woodwinds: Flute 1, Flute 2, Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Bassoon 1, and Bassoon 2. The woodwinds are primarily playing sustained notes with dynamic markings ranging from *mf* to *pp*. Performance instructions include "breathe through instrument" for the flutes and oboes.

Brass: Horn 1, Horn 2, Trumpet 1, Trumpet 2, Trombone 1, Trombone 2, and Tuba. The brass section is playing sustained notes with dynamic markings ranging from *mp* to *f*. Performance instructions include "breathe through instrument" for the horns and trombones.

Percussion: The percussion section includes Timpani, Wind gong (med. yarn), Tom-toms (4) (med. yarn), Brake Dr. (hard rubber), Cowbell, 25" soft felt, 25" med. yarn ord., and Marimba (same mallets). The percussion is playing a variety of rhythmic patterns with dynamic markings ranging from *pp* to *mf*. Performance instructions include "metal beater center" and "rim" for the timpani, and "pizz." for the marimba.

Strings: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The strings are playing sustained notes with dynamic markings ranging from *mf* to *pp*. Performance instructions include "pizz." for the violins and violas, and "arco ord." and "sul pont." for the violoncello and contrabass.

Harp and Celesta: The Harp and Celesta are playing sustained notes with dynamic markings ranging from *mf* to *pp*.

The score includes a variety of dynamic markings, including *pp* (pianissimo), *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *ppp* (pianississimo). It also includes articulation markings such as accents, staccato, and slurs. Performance instructions are provided for many of the instruments, including "breathe through instrument" and "pizz."

22 ♩=66

24

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Timp.

Perc. 1 (Sus. Cymb.)

Perc. 2 (Tom-toms)

Perc. 3 (Lg. Trgl. beater)

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf, *f*, *ff*, *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *ppp*, *n*, *div.*, *ord.*, *unis.*, *med. rubber*, *straight mute*

28 **poco rit.** **31 a tempo (♩=66)**
Ocean Skin: Calmly

Fl. 1 *mf* *p* *mf* *mf* *ff* *p* *n*

Fl. 2 *mf* *p* *mf*

Ob. 1 *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *f*

Ob. 2 *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *f*

Cl. 1 *mf* *p* *mf*

Cl. 2 *mf* *p* *mf*

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

mp

28 **poco rit.** **a tempo (♩=66)**
Ocean Skin: Calmly

Hn. 1 *pp* *p* *mp*

Hn. 2 *pp* *p* *mp*

Tpt. 1 *no accent* *p*

Tpt. 2 *pp*

Tbn. 1 *open* *pp* *p* *pp*

Tbn. 2 *pp* *p* *mp* *pp*

Tba.

28 **poco rit.** **a tempo (♩=66)**
Ocean Skin: Calmly

Timp.

Perc. 1 *p* *mf* *med. yarn* *p*

Perc. 2 *Crotales* *hard plastic* *mp* *p*

Perc. 3

Hp. *mp* *p*

Cel. *f* *mp* *f*

28 **poco rit.** **a tempo (♩=66)**
Ocean Skin: Calmly

Vln. I *mf* *(mf)* *p*

Vln. II *mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *mp* *mf* *ppp* *half section* *pp* *tutti* *mp*

Cb. *pp*

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40

Fl. 1 *mf* *mp* *sf* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *ff*

Fl. 2 *mf* *pp* *mf* *f*

Ob. 1 *mf* *f*

Ob. 2 *f*

Cl. 1 *p* *mf* *mp* *f*

Cl. 2 *pp* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

Bsn. 1 *(mp)* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

Bsn. 2 *mp* *mf* *f* *mf*

Hn. 1 *p*

Hn. 2 *p*

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1 *p* *mf*

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Timp. *mp* *p* *mf*

Perc. 1 *mp* *mf* *f*

Perc. 2 *(mp)* *mf*

Perc. 3 *mp* *mf* *f* *p*

Hp. *f* *mp* *f* *ff*

Cel.

Vln. I *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf* *mp* *f*

Vla. *mf* *pizz.* *arco* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

Vc. *p* *mp* *mf* *f* *sub. mp*

Cb. *mp* *mp* *mf* *f*

[illegible]

52 ♩=80

Fl. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ f (2+3) $\frac{5}{8}$ mp $\frac{3}{4}$ pp $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. 2 f mp pp fp

Ob. 1 f mp pp mf

Ob. 2 f mp pp mf

Cl. 1 f mp pp mf

Cl. 2 f mp pp mf

Bsn. 1 mp mf

Bsn. 2 mp p f mf

Hn. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ ♩=80 (2+3) $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ mf

Hn. 2 p mp mf

Tpt. 1 p mp mf

Tpt. 2 p mp mf

Tbn. 1 straight mute p mp

Tbn. 2 (straight mute) p mp

Tba. p mp

Timp. $\frac{3}{4}$ ♩=80 (2+3) $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Perc. 1 (dry) f p mf

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Hp. f $E\flat$ $F\sharp$ $A\sharp$ 0 f mp f

Cel. f mf p mf

Vln. I (div.) $\frac{3}{4}$ ♩=80 (2+3) $\frac{5}{8}$ pp mp pp $\frac{3}{4}$ n $\frac{4}{4}$ fpp

Vln. II (div.) f pp mf pp mp pp mf $pizz.$ $arco$ p

Vla. pp mf pp mp pp mf $pizz.$ $arco$ p mf

Vc. pp mf pp mp pp mf p mf

div. a 3 p mp p mf p mf n p mf

Cb. p mp p mf p mf n p mf

59 $\text{♩} = \text{♩} = 80$ poco rit.

Fl. 1 mf p pp mp p mf f mf f

Fl. 2 mf p pp mp p mf f

Ob. 1 p mf pp mp p mf f mf f

Ob. 2 pp mp p mf f f

Cl. 1 p mf p mp mf p mp mf f

Cl. 2 p mf pp mp mp mf mf f f

Bsn. 1 p mp mp mf f

Bsn. 2 p mp mp mf f

Hn. 1 p mf f

Hn. 2 mf f

Tpt. 1 open p mp mf f

Tpt. 2 open p mp p mf

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Timp. $6/8$ $2/4$ $9/8$ $6/8$ $2/4$

Perc. 1 Sml. Sus. Cymb. med. yarn $n.$ mp

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Hp. f ff

Cel. mf mp f

Vln. I (div.) mf $molto$ pp mp p mf mp f mp mf

Vln. II (div.) mf $molto$ pp mp p mf mp f p f

Vla. (div.) (mf) mp $un.$ (mp) p mf mp f mf $un.$ $pizz.$ $div.$ $arco.$

Vc. (div.) (mf) mp $un.$ (mf) mp f mp

Cb.

a tempo
♩.=♩.=66 *Cliffsides: Broad*

64

Fl. 1 *mp* *p* *f*

Fl. 2 *mp* *p* *f*

Ob. 1 *mp* *p* *f* *ff*

Ob. 2 *mp* *p* *f* *ff*

Cl. 1 *mp* *p* *mf* *f*

Cl. 2 *mp* *p* *mf* *f* *ff*

Bsn. 1 *mf* *f* *ff*

Bsn. 2 *mf* *f* *ff* *mp*

2/4 4/4 2/4 3/4 4/4

accel. . . (♩.=84)

a tempo
♩.=♩.=66 *Cliffsides: Broad*

64

Hn. 1 *p* *f* *ff* *mf*

Hn. 2 *f* *ff* *mf*

Tpt. 1 *mp* *f*

Tpt. 2 *f*

Tbn. 1 *mf* *f*

Tbn. 2 *f* *p*

Tba. *f* *mp* *p*

2/4 4/4 2/4 3/4 4/4

accel. . . (♩.=84)

a tempo
♩.=♩.=66 *Cliffsides: Broad*

64

28": B♭-G#
25": C#-C♮

Wind Gong (same mallet)

Chimes

Large Triangle beater

Tam-Tam med. felt

Hp. *f* *mf* *ff* *mf*

Cel. *f* *mf*

2/4 4/4 2/4 3/4 4/4

accel. . . (♩.=84)

a tempo
♩.=♩.=66 *Cliffsides: Broad*

64

Vln. I *div.* *n* *p* *ff*

Vln. II *n* *p* *ff*

Vla. *f* *p* *ff* *mp* *pp* *mp*

Vc. *f* *p* *mf* *ff* *p* *div.* *unis.*

Cb. *mp* *f* *sub. mp* *ff* *mf* *mp*

2/4 4/4 2/4 3/4 4/4

accel. . . (♩.=84)

77

Fl. 1 $\frac{4}{4}$ p mp p mf $\frac{3}{4}$ f $\frac{2}{4}$ mf accel.

Fl. 2 p mp f mf

Ob. 1 solo p f mf f

Ob. 2 mf f

Cl. 1 p mp mf f

Cl. 2 p mp mf f

Bsn. 1 p mp f p mp f

Bsn. 2 p mp f mf mp f

Hn. 1 77 $\frac{4}{4}$ mf $\frac{3}{4}$ mp mf $\frac{2}{4}$ f accel.

Hn. 2 mf mp mf mf

Tpt. 1 mf open mp (cup) mf fp mf

Tpt. 2 mp open mp mf

Tbn. 1 mf p mp open mf

Tbn. 2 mf p mp (cup) mf

Tba. p mf fp f fp

77 Timp. $\frac{4}{4}$ pp mp p $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ 28": G \sharp -G \natural accel.

Perc. 1 mp mp f

Perc. 2 mp p

Perc. 3 mf p mp

Hp. $G\flat$ f f

Cel.

77 Vln. I (div.) $\frac{4}{4}$ pp p mf p $\frac{3}{4}$ f $\frac{2}{4}$ f accel.

Vln. II (div.) pp mf p f mp f

Vla. pp p mf p f mp f

Vc. pp p mf p f mp f

Cb. f pp p mp p mf f

musical notation details: notes, rests, dynamics, articulation, and performance instructions

84 ♩=92 *Whipping breezes*

Fl. 1 82 4/4 ff 3 4 f 2 4 mf 4 2 4 4

Fl. 2 3 ff f To picc.

Ob. 1 mf ff f mf mf

Ob. 2 mf ff f mf p mf mp

Cl. 1 mf ff f mp mf mp

Cl. 2 mf ff f mp mp p

Bsn. 1 3

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1 82 4/4 f 3 4 2 4 4 2 4 4

Hn. 2 3 p

Tpt. 1 3 f p harmon mute (stem extended) p mp p

Tpt. 2 3 open f p harmon mute (stem extended) mp

Tbn. 1 sfz f

Tbn. 2

Tba.

82 4/4 mf 3 4 p 2 4 4 2 4 4

82 4/4 mf 3 4 p 2 4 4 2 4 4

Perc. 1 82 4/4 mf 3 4 p 2 4 4 2 4 4

Perc. 2 82 4/4 mf 3 4 p 2 4 4 2 4 4

Perc. 3 82 4/4 mf 3 4 p 2 4 4 2 4 4

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I 82 4/4 mf ff 3 4 f 2 4 p 4 2 4 4 sul pont. mp

Vln. II 82 4/4 mf ff 3 4 f 2 4 p 4 2 4 4 sul pont. mp

Vla. 82 4/4 ff 3 4 f 2 4 p 4 2 4 4 sul pont. p

Vc. 82 4/4 ff 3 4 f 2 4 p 4 2 4 4 sul pont. p

Cb. 82 4/4 ff 3 4 f 2 4 p 4 2 4 4 sul pont. p

88 92

Fl. 1 *f* *mf* *mp*

Fl. 2 *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Ob. 1 *mp*

Ob. 2

Cl. 1 *(p)* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *(p)* *mp*

Cl. 2 *mp* *mf* *pp*

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1 *4/4* *2/4* *3/4* *4/4* *3/4*

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1 *mp* *mf* *p*

Tpt. 2 *mp* *mf* *p*

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Timp. *4/4* *2/4* *3/4* *4/4* *3/4*

Perc. 1 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Perc. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* stick

Perc. 3 *mp* *mf* *n* *mp* *l.v.*

Hp.

Cel.

Vln. I *88* *ord.* *pp* *mf* *ord.* *sub. pp* *3/4* *ord.* *mp* *p* *3/4*

(div.) *ord.* *mp* *ord.* *mf* *ord.* *sub. pp* *ord.* *mp* *p*

Vln. II *ord.* *p* *sul tasto* *pp* *mf* *ord.* *sub. pp* *ord.* *mp* *p* *sul tasto*

Vla. *sul tasto* *p* *mp* *p* *ord.* *sub. pp* *ord.* *p* *mp*

Vc. *sul tasto* *arco* *p* *mp* *p* *ord.* *mf* *sul tasto* *mp*

Cb.

no rit. $\text{♩} \approx 60$ accel. 105 $\text{♩} = 66$

Fl. 1 $\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

Fl. 2 (Picc.) pp p mf p mf

Ob. 1 pp mp mf p mf

Ob. 2 p mf p mf

Cl. 1 p mf p p mf

Cl. 2 p mf p mf

Bsn. 1 p mf p mf

Bsn. 2 p mf p f

Hn. 1 $\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

Hn. 2 pp mp p mf p mf mf f

Tpt. 1 straight mute mf p mp

Tpt. 2 straight mute mf p mp

Tbn. 1 (open) pp mp mf p

Tbn. 2 open mf p

Tba. mf p

Timp. $\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

Perc. 1 Wind gong med. yarn n mp

Perc. 2 Crotales bowed mp mf

Perc. 3 Lg. Trgl. beater pp

Hp. mf ff mp

Cel.

Vln. I $\frac{12}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

Vln. II n $ord. vib.$ $pizz.$ $arco$ mf pp mf $sub. p$ f p mf ff

Vla. $ord. vib.$ $non div.$ $pizz.$ $arco non div.$ mf p mf f mp

Vc. $div. \sharp$ mf mp mf $unis.$ mf f mf

Cb. mf mp f mf f

109

Fl. 1

p *ff* *mp*

To flute

115

Fl. 2 (Picc.)

p *ff* *mp*

Ob. 1

p *ff* *mp*

Ob. 2

p *f* *ff*

Cl. 1

ff *mp* *ff*

Cl. 2

p *f* *ff*

Bsn. 1

f *ff* *p*

Bsn. 2

mf *f* *ff* *molto vib.* *ord.* *mf* *f* *p*

Hn. 1

mf *f* *ff* *mf* *p*

Hn. 2

f *mf* *f* *ff* *f* *mp*

Tpt. 1

f *ff*

Tpt. 2

mf *ff*

Tbn. 1

mf *f* *ff* *molto vib.* *ord.* *mf* *p*

Tbn. 2

mf *(mf)* *ff* *molto vib.* *ord.* *mf*

Tba.

f *mf* *ff* *mf* *p* *mp*

109

Timp.

mf *sub. p* *f* *(Eb)* *p* *mp* *pp*

Perc. 1

Wind gong stick *mp* *f*

Perc. 2

Lg. Sus. Cymb. stick *f* *mp* *mf*

Perc. 3

Tam-tam felt *f* *l.v.*

Hp.

f

Cel.

109

Vln. I

sfz *f* *ff*

Vln. II

sfz *f* *ff*

Vla.

sfz *f* *ff* *gliss.* *mp* *f* *molto vib.*

Vc.

sfz *f* *ff* *cantabile* *p* *mf*

Cb.

f *ff* *mp* *n*

[illegible]

122 *simile decay* **rit.** $(\text{♩}=56)$ 129 **Coda: single gust of wind** $\text{♩}=72$

Fl. 1 *simile decay* *mp* *p* *pp dolce*

Fl. 2 *mp* *p*

Ob. 1 *pp* *p* *pp*

Ob. 2 *pp* *p* *pp*

Cl. 1 *simile decay* *mp* *p* *pp*

Cl. 2 *simile decay* *mp* *p* *pp*

Bsn. 1 *p* *pp* *mp*

Bsn. 2 *p* *pp* *mp*

Hn. 1 **rit.** $(\text{♩}=56)$ $\text{♩}=72$ **Coda: single gust of wind**

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1 *straight mute* *p*

Tpt. 2 *straight mute* *p* *mp*

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Tim. $(\text{♩}=56)$ $\text{♩}=72$ **Coda: single gust of wind**

Perc. 1 *mp* *p*

Perc. 2 Chimes rawhide *mp* *p* *pp*

Perc. 3 *Marimba med. yarn* *p* *mp* *pp*

Hp. *A₄* *mp* *p* *l.v.*

Cel. *sempre pp* *mp* *p* *pp*

Vln. I **rit.** $(\text{♩}=56)$ $\text{♩}=72$ **Coda: single gust of wind**

Vln. II (div.) *con sord. non vib.* *div. non vib.* *with quick decay* *mp* *n* *ppp dolce* *non vib.* *ord.* *pp* *mp*

Vla. *pizz.* *mp* *con sord. arco* *with quick decay* *p* *n* *pp* *pp dolce* *arco* *pp dolce* *mp*

Vc.

Cb. *no cresc.* *n*

130

Fl. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. 2

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1 $\frac{13}{8}$ pp p mp pp

Bsn. 2

Hn. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1 pp (straight mute) p mp pp

Tpt. 2 pp (straight mute) mp pp

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Tba.

Timp. $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ pp

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3 (Marim.) mp p mp mp pp

Hp. mf mp p

Cel.

Solo Vln. $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vln. I (div.) $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Vln. II (div.) fpp pp mp n

Vla. fpp pp mp n

Vc. mp pp mp p

Cb. (con sord.) pp p pp

